



STOCK MARKET

BSE

61346.77



379.72(0.62%)

NSE

18275.35

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A CLASSY WEB- Arachnology students from Kochi win at Bangkok

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By Express News Service

Researchers at the Spider Research Center, Division of Arachnology, of Sacred Heart College, Thevara, Kochi have won research awards and recognition in the recently concluded 5th Asian Arachnology Conference that was held at Bangkok, on November 19 to 22.

Research student Aneesh Mathew Vergis bagged the first prize in the student poster presentation competition for his studies on the lesser-known arachnid, pseudoscorpions of India. Another research student, Jithin Jonson, secured the third position for his studies on the same group of arachnids. Contestants from 19 Asian and European countries took part in the event.

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Both of them are doing research under the supervision of Mathew MJ, Assistant Professor of Zoology. "These awards are an international recognition for the quality of research being done at our centre," said Mathew. "Ours is the only centre that is conducting research on pseudoscorpions currently in India." Also, findings on the spider diversity of the high-altitude Shola ecosystems of Western Ghats were also presented in the conference.

The description of a rare spider, *Coenopychus*, which imitates wasps, grabbed the attention of the scientific community. After it was first sighted nearly a century and a half ago in 1885 by the French naturalist Eugene Simon in Ramanathapuram of Tamil Nadu, it is the first time this rare spider appeared before the researchers in a high-altitude patch in the Parambikulam Tiger Reserve. This discovery, made by a team consisting of the director of the research division, PA Sebastian, along with Mathew and research students Jimmy Paul and Pradeep MS, has been published in the prominent international science journal *Zootaxa*.

Mathew M J has also been elected to the council of the Asian Society of Arachnology for a three-year term. He has been entrusted with the coordination of the academic and scientific activities of the society.

The next Asian Ara technology Conference will be held in Kochi in November 2020. It will be jointly organised by Mathew and Sunil Jose K of Devamatha College, Kuravilangad.